

# Street fair will honor firefighters who battled Eastbay hills inferno

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**By Judy Ronningen**  
*Tribune staff writer*

A group formed to revive community spirit after the Eastbay hills fire is planning the mother of all post-fire street fairs Dec. 15 at the Rockridge BART station.

The party, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., is a thank-you to the heroes of the fire and a way for residents of several burned-out neighborhoods and the rest of the community to get together, said Carolyn Kemp of Phoenix Ninety One.

"We all need a gathering like this to help us accept what happened and start rebuilding our lives," said Kevin Donahue of Oakland, a coordinator of the event, who lost his home Oct. 20.

The Drifters will highlight the entertainment, which will range from salsa to steel drum music to Dixieland. Eastbay restaurants, many affected by the fire, will open

food booths. There will be children's activities and booths on emergency preparedness.

The guests of honor will be firefighters from more than 60 battalions who helped fight the Oct. 20 fire, along with paramedics, police and PG&E workers who responded to the emergency.

Firefighters and their families will come from as far away as Yuba and Stanislaus counties, Kemp said.

"We started talking about this a month ago, because it was when the height of the criticism of the firefighters by the media was going on," Kemp said.

The phoenix, a bird from Egyptian mythology that was burned to death and then rose from its ashes, has become the symbol for dozens of neighborhood groups formed to rebuild after the fire.

Phoenix Ninety One includes residents of several of those neighborhoods as well as local merchants.